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CITIZENSHIP IN SOUTHERN EDUCATION.¹

IN reading the reports of this association, one is impressed with three characteristics. In the first place, there is a brave analysis of present conditions; in the second place, there is an appeal for better standards; in the third place, there is a recognition that teachers in the South are called to a mission broader than schoolbooks and class exercises, a mission of social leadership in a section full of great, yet partially developed, resources. More than any other part of our nation, the South is looking to its schools for leadership in all phases of its growing life. To meet this demand the narrowness of the academic must be regarded as the chrysalis out of which will come the school of the future, responsive to every need of democratic citizenship.

My belief in the larger social influence of this association has led me to choose as a subject this morning "Citizenship in Southern Education," not in order to harangue you with a string of citizenly generalities, but to discuss, from a layman's point of view, without the authority of a specialist, the place of the different social sciences in education, with some reference to the South. Born and schooled in North Carolina, I have increased my home interest in southern education by two years' special study of the subject; and more and more enthusiastic has grown my hope for what might be called the socialization of the schools, vitalizing all instruction and connecting it more closely with social activities.

In explaining this hope, I ask you to pardon me for discussing a few platitudes, acknowledged but little heeded. Education is a life-process, in, as well as out of, school. It is the development *of* life *to* life *in* life *by* life *through* life. These five prepositions are not meaningless; they represent the five factors of the teacher's ideal.

The development *of* life considers the student or child—the livest, the most normal, and in school the most important of the five. In spite of varying degrees of repression in home and school, the child-

¹ Read at the annual meeting of the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Southern States, New Orleans, November, 1904.

life is always potentially, if not actually, present in education. The increased regard for this life is beginning to transform elementary and secondary schools, and pioneers are trying to bring the natural child-life into the school without limiting its expression.

The development *to* life considers the mature man or woman—the school product, with faculties developed to a point of personal unselfishness and sweetness, practical efficiency, and social capacity and desire. Here individuality is stressed, not at the expense of sociality, but because the latter is mainly advanced by the former.

The development *in* life considers the social whole, in relation to which the individual gets his significance. This factor is all-inclusive, and no subject, however valuable in itself, should find place in a curriculum without undergoing a comparative test as to its direct or indirect social value. This social value is due to its effect upon the different activities of individuals combined to increase the common welfare. The school should not be separate from its environment, but a center where the environment is studied and where the will to serve it is developed.

The development *by* life considers the agent or teacher. Theoretically the teacher is chosen by the social life as the one most fit, through knowledge of the child and of society, to prepare the child-life for participation in social activities. Practically the teacher, in many schools of every grade, is out of contact, knowledge, and sympathy with the social life; is often so foreign to it that the child instinctively recognizes that this agent of society is not of that life which he or she has been called to represent. Not only are many teachers personally incapable or unwilling to be social forces, both in and out of the school, but their supposed training often precludes such capacity or desire. Our great universities furnish examples of this desocialization in their tendency to exclude the graduate student from real human life, and to develop his mind and heart and body in conformity to an ideal of investigation for which a charnel-house would be more suitable than a schoolroom or a public assembly. Specialization is invaluable, but society does not, or should not, demand its benefits at the price of a social service which could be made an inspiring leadership for the people. No amount of self-excuse, on account of school duties or of superiority to the evil in social factors, can

save the teacher of any grade from a just condemnation for such negligence.

The development *through* life considers—in school education—methods, text-books, and curricula—instruments that are of value in so far as they use and express life. Without life are those methods which fill in rather than draw out, which slave to text-books and memory tests, which glorify system and ignore the individual. With life are the new methods of learning by doing in the shop and garden, of getting at the facts in the laboratory, of expressing one's thoughts in the essay, of judging the phenomena back of social science. The text-book has the duty, first, of revealing vitally the phase of life considered, and, second, of appealing to the interests and understanding of the child. Many text-books are filled with mature thoughts systematized and devitalized, the formality, the logical outlines, the condensations seeming to preclude vitality. In addition to text-books with less system and more life, we need that freedom by which the child will use them mainly as guides, and will learn in most part by its own social activity, and by its contact with the teacher and the master-minds in the subject studied.

It is through the curricula that the socialization of the schools can be most readily advanced. When the Committee of Ten suggests that, if equally well given, "all the main subjects taught in the secondary schools [be] of equal rank for the purposes of admission to college or scientific school," as "all would be used for training the powers of observation, memory, expression, and reasoning," the committee must have been considering individual discipline without direct regard for social efficiency. There is another recommendation in the report that curricula should be the same for students preparing or not preparing for college; therefore it would be possible for students to go from the secondary school into active citizenship with little or no knowledge of social forces, and with little of the discipline developed by study for such knowledge. Of course, college-entrance requirements do not cover the entire secondary course; but the principle of the equivalence of studies, as suggested by the committee, is too doubtful to be carried out even in its own programs. As the great service of the secondary school is in preparing the majority of its students for immediate social activity, a knowledge of society and an

ability to deal with it seem the vital aim of school work, making the social sciences more important than those studies which give a knowledge and a discipline not connected with social activity, except as the trained student applies his increased mental power in fields to which his training has been little related. Here we have a roundabout education, necessitating a transference of knowledge and discipline, with an inevitable loss in both. And as social application is the aim of individual training, no subject can avoid its test. It is in order to lessen the transference that I appeal for the superiority of the social sciences in high school and college, and, to a less degree, in the elementary school, although in the last the child is less socially inclined by nature, and the tools of civilization must be learned as preceding further development.

Of course, I do not wish to undervalue the other subjects in a curriculum, and I readily see that the social sciences, even if properly taught, do not lead directly to social efficiency. The scientific temper to be gained from laboratory work in the natural sciences has developed the scientific study of the social sciences; and the latter in all schools should be strengthened by the spirit gained from the former, which uses a method more evident in its regard for exactness. It must be added that this paper is dealing only with general education, and not with professional training, where a practical aim is always in view. However, when a committee of this association suggests as a division of college work 720 hours for language and literature (only one-third designated as English), 240 hours for mathematics, 720 hours for the natural sciences, and only 240 hours for the social sciences and philosophy, it is evident that the last group will have to use the 480 hours reserved for electives, if it is to have equal emphasis. In the 240 hours suggested, one course of three hours a week generally goes to some phase of philosophy, and the one remaining course of three hours will be left to cover the ground of history, civil government, economics, and sociology. This situation is further complicated by the possibility of entering the colleges of this association without any knowledge of history at all, as a course in science can be offered as an alternative for American history. The report of Dr. Dabney in 1898 showed that the average requirements for the B.A. degree in these colleges was 1,090 hours for language and literature, 626 hours for

mathematics and science, and 364 for the social sciences and philosophy. The report of another committee, on the "Status of History in the Colleges and Schools of the South," would be discouraging, were it not for the progress made by a few colleges. The leadership of this association and the facts mentioned seem to call for a revision of standards, in line with the best practice in our schools: first, using the four-year high-school course in history and civics prepared by the association; second, making American history and civics an absolute requirement for college entrance, and another course in history an alternate requirement; third, giving the social sciences a place in college equal to that given any other main division. Let me repeat that my argument is not against any other subject in high school or college, though, personally, I believe in condensing the work in mathematics and ancient languages.

My desire is to stress the value of the social sciences in regard to discipline, knowledge, vitality, and social usefulness—the four requirements of any school study. To do this more fully, I wish to examine the aims and methods in teaching history, because it is the foundation of the social sciences and the methods of teaching it are applicable to all. In regard to discipline, history is inferior in pure logic, strong in ethics and memory-training, equal to other subjects in concentration and sustained effort, and superior to all in social judgment. Between the older method of teaching by compulsion regardless of interest, even now used in most schools, and the extreme method of yielding entirely to a student's whims, there is the golden mean of combining effort and interest so closely that the effort comes from an inner impulse, and is therefore educative. Complaints of flabbiness in certain model schools may have good cause, but the harking back to compulsion without interest is contrary to the laws of psychology. The will is not best trained by imposed authority, but by self-expression in work, however difficult. History should be one of the "hardest" subjects in a curriculum, demanding a study of much material and the constant exercise of judgment; however, this work should be made the outcome of the interest that history could excite. And then it must be remembered that history itself is but the expression of will, and its study is a natural incentive to the student to express his own will socially. Therefore, both in the vitality of its subject

and its study, history offers a rare combination for effort and interest.

By the training of judgment is meant the ability to decide on human thought and action—ability which is often hindered as well as helped by pure logic, but which cannot be developed except by contact, through experience or social studies, with individual and social activities, both in their causes and effects. Although history, in common with all school subjects, is feeble beside experience, it bears the closest resemblance to this greatest of teachers, and partly compensates for its lack of personal intensity by its variety and scope. The value of its study is mainly in the discipline it gives in judging of social processes and the individual's relations thereto. Here is also a training in ethics, made more effective if indirectly given. That most history-teaching neglects these opportunities is no argument that they do not exist. As random examples of what might be done, suppose a student were to study with care the causes that led the English Parliament to restore the monarchy in 1660, or the weakness of our own Articles of Confederation, or the French influences over Charles II, or the resignation of Jefferson from Washington's cabinet, or the economic influences of slavery. Can it be denied that such a study would develop social judgment? Objection will be made that students in college, and especially in high school, have not sufficient mature experience to reason about such matters, and that in order to form independent judgments an immense amount of data is needed, inaccessible to the student and impossible for him to analyze. The source method is not absolutely required for this purpose. The judgment suggested is to be sought from studying, under skilled guidance, a historian's analysis of these social and individual acts, with the aid of sources and parallel readings for illustration and even for correction. The analysis can be suited both by the historian and the teacher to the student's understanding, which, even in the elementary schools, is able to think about the simpler causes of the facts mentioned. The student should often be made to express in reports his judgments of history, thereby gaining an admirable discipline in clearness of thought and expression.

From the standpoint of discipline, therefore, most of our history text-books must be rewritten. An enumeration of "leading facts,"

so meaningless to the student in themselves, must give way to a careful selection of such facts as should demand the student's interest, and to a longer treatment of the causes and effects of those acts in terms which the student can understand. Quality, not quantity, is desired, and in simplifying history for text-books condensation is not as necessary as omission. Give the student an opportunity to think about the facts he learns, so that memory will not be degraded to the level of verbal repetition, and that life will be enriched by thought-connections with the great movements of history. In selecting the facts for longer treatment, there should be no necessity for omitting the most important; the continuity of social development should be made more intelligible by connecting the facts with the life from which they came successively. Of course, such text-books would require the authorship of specialists with historical judgment and insight possessed by few people, and without any taint of provincialism.

In regard to knowledge, the value of history to the present is self-evident, because the present is simply a product of the past, without which it cannot be understood. All school subjects connected with human development—as, for instance, the natural sciences—should be taught with a historical background. If trained to appreciate the present value of history, the student will welcome the study of it more freely than he does some subjects whose use is hidden from him. But lists of dates, battles, kings, presidents, and other abstracted bits have little connection with life, little interest, and little value. Naturally, the student objects to them. The great movements and the great men should be the material for his study, details and connecting links getting their significance by relation to these central topics. A recent writer in the *Teachers College Record* criticises the twofold methods of text-books in being encyclopædias as well as books for school instruction. By trying to include too much, they lose nearly all. It is fortunate that a text-book most valuable for discipline can also be most valuable for knowledge, because the student will know best the things he has thought about most, and the facts of most worth will be the facts requiring most thought.

The vitality and social usefulness of history have already been stressed, but mention should be made of its power in cultivating the imagination of students, even stronger in the schools than that of

literature. In spite of my own professional choice of literature, I am forced to recognize that the ordinary boy or girl has for the most part a formal rather than a vital interest in it. And even when the young student does show an interest in the classics, it is in those poems and stories that deal with historical subjects, as *Evangeline*, *Twice-Told Tales*, Macaulay's lyrics, Scott's novels, and *Idylls of the King*. Consider the imaginative training to be had from spending the winter at Valley Forge with Washington's army, or from living with Bismarck during the organization of the German Empire. Not only should this opportunity be used in the history courses, but also selections from history and biography should be given as part of the English courses, the kinship between the two subjects being shown by a historical interpretation of literature and a literary interpretation of history. And, finally, the habit of reading history should be developed, even in the elementary school, by parallel study and a constant appeal to the student's interest.

That civil government is considered necessary to the education of all our citizens is apparent by its being included in the public and private schools of the South. Theoretically our citizens are thus being well prepared, but practically they are having to rely almost entirely upon experience for such preparation. They learn governmental details after leaving school by more or less fitful contact with the actual, working machinery; and in time this knowledge is clumsily put together into a conception of government, which may also contain faint memories of some manual drilled into and out of their heads. The trouble is in the tendency of all school work to teach abstractions and neglect the life. There are several good manuals in civics, but a manual is just what the student does not need, especially below the high school. He wants to know a few active, live things about government, not a paper analysis of all county, state, and national departments. Does the primary or secondary student learn anything from a recital of the divisions of the United States Department of the Interior? He does not need an encyclopædia in monosyllables. To get life in civics, the child must come into personal contact with civic life. He should be taken to a county courthouse and observe, under guidance, the different activities of county government; he should study in school available local, state, or

national documents; he should learn about local campaigns and go to the polls on election day; he should read newspaper accounts of the legislature and of Congress; he should interpret school discipline as embodying the principles of law. Above all, the teacher should seek to make him understand the aims and methods of taxation, and the responsibility of voters and officials to the public good. Civics should be closely connected with American history, both for the historical interpretation of civic activities and for the development of proper ideals of public service. Citizenship is a matter of head and heart, and the heart should be touched by actual knowledge, not by sentimentality and ignorance. As political corruption is no monopoly of place or race, the teachers of the South must protect the democracy of its future. Manuals alone will never give much aid to this end.

The secondary-school graduate should have gained, through studying the economic phases of history and civics, a fair knowledge of applied economics—a knowledge not as well systematized as that gained from a special text-book, but with most students a knowledge more usable. The authorities I have consulted seem to agree that economics should be included in the history courses below the college; and, in fact, history cannot be well taught without emphasis upon its industrial factor—one of the most potent in social development. Economic laws can be illustrated both by the observance and the violation of them in history, especially in that of our own nation. Even primary students can get from this study some idea of money, tariff, wages, prices, etc.; and the large proportion of American civic rulers who do not enter the high school ought to have an intelligent, even if limited, knowledge of these matters. Particularly is economics important in the new South, which has well begun an economic development destined to revolutionize its life. With college courses in this subject I am not prepared to deal, but will only say that from personal experience I know how a student can get an almost perfect mark on economics and leave college without an idea gained from the study. This experience is probably typical of theory taught by rote. What the courses need is a study of local conditions, and parallel reading in books which analyze actual economic problems.

The teaching of applied sociology in the South has just begun its

mission. Instead of confining the student's attention to vague philosophic conceptions of social progress, the sociology in southern colleges should deal with the many problems pressing upon its citizens for solution. As the negro question has dominated our history, as it is still a question, and as the nation is asking us to answer it, our college students should be led to give it thorough study, using all available data from all sources. You will agree with me that, without fear or favor, this question should be studied with a scientific thirst for truth and right. Any such study will be criticised, but the men of power in the new South will welcome it. The child-labor problem demands the leadership of colleges in its solution. The flocking of families from deserted farms to factory centers and wage-dependence is serious in its consequences, unless employees can be made independent, effective citizens. Our rural population is a source of our strength, and we must seek to increase the social efficiency and attractiveness of rural life so that our cities will not drain the best from the country. Then there is education, the sociological factor of supreme importance to the South at present; then the development of a wise independence in political life, seeking discussion as necessary to political health; the recognition of the social duties inherent in our growing economic power; the guarding of our southern home life in its purity and strength; the socialization of our church activities and the continuance of our belief in Christianity as the saving force in society. These are a few of the topics for the new sociology in our southern colleges, the crowning ideal of their mission of leadership, the neglect of which may make them guilty of selling their birthright for a mess of potage.

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